

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Today, Congressman Jim Costa (D-Bakersfield) announced an award of 17 classic books on the theme of "Created Equal" to numerous school libraries in Bakersfield and Sanger. This award was made possible through the National Endowment for the Humanities' (NEH) *We The People* Bookshelf program. The Bookshelf includes Spanish translations to accompany four of the selected titles.

"Reading is the most fundamental skill students need for success," said Costa. "These classic books that are on their way to these schools will enrich the lives of these students, as well as teach them our nation's history in a way they can appreciate and understand."

The *We The People* Bookshelf program will distribute 3,000 sets of books to city, town, and neighborhood libraries, as well as libraries in public, private, charter and home schools in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Each library will receive a set of 17 books along with posters, bookmarks, and other promotional materials from NEH through the American Library Association. As part of the award, libraries are organizing programs or events to raise awareness of these classic books and engage young readers.

Bakersfield schools libraries receiving this award are: Bessie E. Owens Intermediate School, Bessie E. Owens Primary School, Casa Loma Elementary School, College Heights Elementary School, Emerson Middle School, Fremont Elementary School, Jefferson Elementary School Library, Leo G. Pauly Elementary School, McKinley Elementary School, Mount Vernon Elementary School, Rafer Johnson Community Middle School, Ramon Garza Elementary School, Sequoia Middle School, Sierra Middle School, Wayside Elementary School, and Williams Elementary School.

Sanger schools libraries receiving this award are: Del Rey Elementary School Library, Jackson Elementary School Library, Lincoln Elementary School Library, Lone Star Elementary School Library, Madison Elementary School Library, Reagan Elementary School Library, Sanger Academy Charter School Library, Sanger High School Library, and Washington Academic Middle School Library.

Some of the books that are part of this award include *The Ugly Duckling*, *The Gettysburg Address*, *Elija of Buxton*, *Many Thousand Gone: African Americans from Slavery to Freedom*, *Breaking Through*, and *Freedom Walkers: The Story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott*.